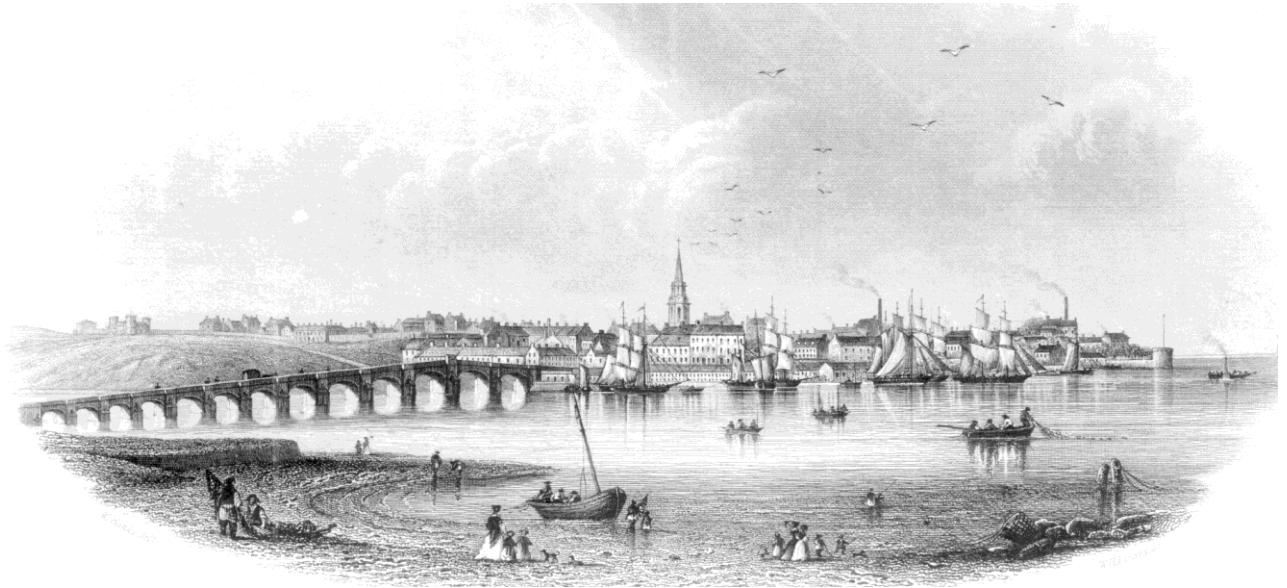


Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 91–MARCH 2017

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 24th March 2017

Friends AGM in the Parish Centre, Berwick.
7pm start. Followed by a talk – Cross
Border Crime ; Margaret Fox and Linda
Bankier at 7.45 pm.

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

This new section will highlight one off events which are happening

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Sunday 5 th March 2017 | The Half-Shilling Curate : Sarah Reay talks about her ancestor, a Wesleyan Padre during First World War. 2.30pm at Bell View, Belford |
| Monday 6 th March 2017 | Second World War Defences on the North Northumberland Coast: Paul Thompson. 11am in Berwick Record Office, Walkergate |
| Sunday 19 th March 2017 | Suffragette: 2015 Film. 2.30 pm at the Ferguson Hall, Belford. |

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Venue: Ayton Community Hall | Time:7.30 p.m. |
| Tuesday 28 th March | AGM followed by a talk on Coldingham Priory in context: Dr Chris Bowles |
| Tuesday 25 th April | Visit to Coldingham Priory |

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

- | | |
|---|--|
| Venue: Bell View Resource Centre | Time: 7.30 p.m. |
| Wednesday 29 th March | The Great North Road- Scotch Corner to Borders: George Nairn |
| Wednesday 26 th April | The Rise of Northumbria 590-650: Michael Thomson |
| Wednesday 24 th May | Northumbrian Identity (language, music, dance, customs) : Kim Bibby-Wilson |

BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY

Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 8th March

Richard, Duke of Gloucester Part 2: Dr
Sandra Pendlington

Wednesday 12th April

AGM followed by a talk on Three
Generations of Craft Woodworking: Andrew
Beckwith.

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 15th March

Berwick 900 & the Our Families Project:
Linda Bankier

Wednesday 19th April

AGM held at 6.45pm followed by a talk on
Smuggling on the N.E. Coast during the 18th
century: Tony Barrow

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 6th March

Vindolanda: The Excavation of a Fort and
Settlement in Transition: Andrew Birley

Monday 3rd April

Iron Age and Roman Period Glass Bangles
Arts Connect People: Tatania Ivleva:

Monday 8th May

Bradford Kaims: A Prehistoric Landscape:
Paul Gething

Monday 5th June

The Needle's Eye Enclosure: Salt
Production in the late Iron Age: Jenny
Proctor

BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose

Time: 2.30pm

Sunday 26th March

Mulling over Melrose with ScotlandsPlaces:
Kim Beasley

Sunday 30th April

Farm Servants of South-East Scotland,
1750-1914: David McLean

Sunday 28th May

AGM followed by a talk

BOWSDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Bowsden Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 6th March

Generosity, Rumour and Suspicion: An update on the Belgian Refugees: story with cast (compiled by Julie Gibbs)

Monday 3rd April

From St. Aidans to the Reformation: the Story of Lindisfarne Priory: Howard Culley

CHIRNSIDE HISTORY GROUP

Venue: Community Centre

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 20th March

Ayton Castle: Brian Parsons

Monday 17th April

Polish Soldiers in the Borders: Lady McEwan

Monday 15th May

16th Century Food Standard Agency (books for sale): Margaret Skea

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 2nd March

AGM at 6.15pm & refreshments followed by a talk on Norham: Martha Andrews

Thursday 6th April

Border Union Agricultural Society 1813-2013: Charlie Robertson

Thursday 4th May

Robert Fortune of Kelloe, Plant Hunter, Adventurer and Spy: Isobel Gordon

Thursday 1st June

A walk round Kelso, field trip: Christine Henderson.

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Duns Social Club, 41 Newton St, Duns.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 29th March

Berwick Cockles: Cameron Robertson

Wednesday 26th April

Berwickshire's Poor 1800-1914: David McLean

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 8th March

Hens that want to crow: Suffragists and Suffragettes of the North-East 1866- 1918: Liz O'Donnell

Wednesday 12th April

Mary Eleanor Bowes of Gibside (1749-1800): "the Greatest Heiress of the North: Anthony Atkinson. Followed by a short AGM.

Saturday 22nd April

Outing: Gibside-details to follow

LOWICK HERITAGE GROUP

Venue: Lowick Village Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 13th March

The Many Nuisances of Lowick 1890s to 1906: story with cast (compiled by Julie Gibbs)

Monday 10th April

Social Event in the Black Bull, Lowick

NORHAM AND LADYKIRK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 13th March

Drove Roads: Shelagh Townsend-Rose

Monday 10th April

My Time with Enigma: Mrs Mary Sherrard

Monday 8th May

Mary Somerville (1780-1872)

Scientist/Writer: Isobel Gordon

Monday 12th June

Flodden Documentary Research Project:
Linda Bankier

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland **Time: 7.00 p.m.**

Wednesday 22nd March

The Secret Army of North

Northumberland: Phil Rowett

Wednesday 26th April

Rescued from the Sea, British

Archaeology at its finest!: Barry Mead

Wednesday 24th May

The Roman Forts of Housesteads,

Segedunum and Arbeia: Ken

Hutchinson

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

Venue: Bell View Resource Centre, 33 West Street, Belford **Time: 10.00am**

Saturday 18th March

Members' Forum

Saturday 8th April

Researching the History of your House:

Gill Blanchard

Saturday 20th May

Members' Forum and AGM

TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Crookham Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 5th April

AGM followed by "An Update of Events in
2016: Richard Carlton

Wednesday 3rd May

Environmental Change and Archaeology:
Richard Tipping

Wednesday 7th June

Durham and Dunbar; Identifying Scottish
Soldiers at Palace Green: Richard Annis

ARCHIVE NEWS

Christmas came and went very quickly and it's hard to believe we are now in the 3rd month of the year. Usually the period December to February is quieter for the Record Office but not this year!

December 2016 saw the end of the Flodden Project after 4 years of work. At the beginning of that month, we held a meeting to consider what we had achieved, and what could still be done. Over 60 people attended to hear about the different strands of the project including archaeology and documentary research. We also launched the Flodden publication which is a mixture of articles by volunteers and project staff on the archaeological digs as well as research undertaken by the documentary research volunteers on subjects such as the horses, the ships and the role of Berwick. This has been a great project which I have really enjoyed working on. It has introduced me to lots of new people and many of my volunteers have gone on to work on other projects with me.

At the moment, the Peregrini Project is taking up all my time. We are now in the second year of this project. We are still continuing to look at the Cocklawburn area and it is fascinating how we keep finding little snippets. We have also continued to research the Holy Island lifeboats and the interpretation boards in the Lifeboat House should go up in April. Again, we have uncovered some fascinating stories and keep finding out more. I have also been working with a group of volunteers on setting up a database to record the family information gathered by Professor Sheddick on index cards relating to Holy Island residents in the past. Thanks to committed volunteers, we have trialled and now created a database which will make all this information more accessible. This project is scheduled to finish at the end of 2017 but like, all projects, it will continue to have a life after that – research never finishes.

Before Christmas, the Friends launched their first publication – The Fifties in Focus – a series of photo from the Photocentre collection. The book has been very successful and we have sold about 400 copies already which is a great achievement in 3 months. We plan to produce a book of Sixties photos for next Christmas. Work will start on that shortly and so, watch this space.

During this period, the Record Office has continued to do some outreach work. I have given a couple of talks – Maritime Berwick to Wooler U3A; Lowick Churchyard Survey to Lowick Heritage Group and the Our Families Project to the North Northumberland Branch of NDFHS.

Finally, there are about to be some changes at the Record Office which will not affect the public service but the Friends should be aware of. Around April 2017, the Northumberland Archives Service, including the Berwick Record Office will no longer be part of Woodhorn Charitable Trust but will transfer back into Northumberland County Council. We have been assured that there will be no changes to the service that we offer at the moment but obviously there is a lot of work ensuring there is a smooth transition from one to the other. This work is keeping Sue Wood and I busy. Life in the Record Office is interesting and keeps Carole and I on our toes !

Linda Bankier

HOLY ISLAND LIFEBOAT

For the past year, we have been undertaking research on the Holy Island Lifeboats. It is fascinating where information turns up, particularly unexpectedly. For example. Nigel Sumerling found the first article in Professor Sheddick's notes. I found the second one whilst preparing the 100 years ago column for the Berwick Advertiser which led me to look for the third one online. You never know where research might take you !

12 February 1896 (newspaper cutting)

On Wednesday morning, the fishing boats were all out at Holy island and the wind being from the north east the sea rose very rapidly and the island was in a state of excitement. One boat was seen outside the barr at 9.00 am unable to come in and the vicar with Mr Wilson from the Northumberland Arms determined to launch the Grace Darling Lifeboat and go to the rescue. Soon a volunteer crew was procured comprising the vicar and sexton of the church, Mr Robertson, fishmerchant, Mr Yetts, a sailor, Mr Wilson of the Beacons and a few fishermen, two of whom had been ill for weeks, but who volunteered in the effort to save their fellows. The women were most daring, helping to launch the boat by rushing into the water and soon the boat was afloat. The first boats crews got onboard and in crossing the barr heavy seas struck the coble which the lifeboat was towing and washed an oar away

making the coble almost leap into the lifeboat. of which the rudder was damaged by the collision. Again and again the lifeboat crossed the barr till twelve men were safely landed. The Grace Darling remained outside till the rest of the boats had come in.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 12 JANUARY 1917

HOLY ISLAND – LIFEBOAT SUPPER AND PRESENTATION

A supper was given in the schoolroom at Holy Island on Wednesday evening to the lifeboat crew, the rocket lifesaving company, and the coast watchers. The Vicar, the Rev Irvine Cranshaw presided. Mr Joseph Shell proposed the Lifeboat Institution, including the Holy Island branch. This was responded to by Coxswain Cromarty, who referred to the fact that the lifeboat had been called out for service eleven times during the year, resulting in the rescue of 59 lives. Mr T Kyle proposed the toast of the rocket lifesaving company and the coast watchers, which was responded to by Mr Ben Kyle. After supper the public were admitted for the presenting of a silver medal to Coxswain Cromarty, a pleasing sequel to the rescue of the crew of the barque Jolani. Mr Robertson occupied the chair. And called upon the secretary to read a communication from the Lifeboat Institution from which the following are extracts : “The committee of Management are of opinion that was a specially fine service carried out in a hurricane, in a heavy sea. Amid driving rain and very rough weather”. “The Committee of Management decided to mark their appreciation of this fine service by the following awards – To George Cromarty, coxswain, the silver medal of the Institution and the thanks inscribed on vellum. To Thomas Kyle, second coxswain, the thanks of the Institution on vellum. To the two coxswains and to each member of the crew an additional award of £1!

In pinning the medal on Coxswain Cromarty. Miss Carlyn Crawshaw, the young daughter of the Vicar said – Mr Cromarty, I am glad you have been awarded the silver medal by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution because you and your crew have deserved it and I am pleased to have the honour of pinning this medal on the breast of a very brave man. I hope you will live a long time to wear it.

THE SCOTSMAN, 16 JANUARY 1937

DEATH OF MR GEORGE CROMARTY OF HOLY ISLAND

The death has occurred at his home at Holy Island, Northumberland of Mr George Cromarty, a well known fisherman, with a fine record as a lifeboatman. Until he

retired in 1932, he was the coxswain of the Holy Island lifeboat for 32 years, his association with the lifeboat service extending over half a century.

On three occasions he was decorated by George V for rescuing crews in distress off the coast and he was also awarded the National Lifeboat Institution's VC for a series of brave actions during the Great War. In November 1916 as coxswain of the lifeboat, he was instrumental in saving the crew of 14 of the Swedish barque, Jolani, which had been driven ashore in a gale. On that occasion, the lifeboat on its carriage, had to be drawn over the sands for six miles before it could be launched and the lifeboatmen were at sea for 12 hours before the crew could be taken off.

The second rescue for which he was decorated was that of the crew of nine of the Hartlepool trawler, James B. Graham, which in January 1922 was wrecked on the north side of the island. The whole village took part in the launch and the women were specially thanked by the Lifeboat Institution for the part they played. They waded waist deep in the water in lending their assistance.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

PROFESSOR SHEDDICK'S DATABASE

As I mentioned in my Archive News, the Record Office has just started a large project to enter into a database the information collected by Professor Sheddick on Holy Island families. Professor Sheddick was a social anthropologist who undertook a lot of research on the Island but sadly died before he could publish anything. His papers were given to the Record Office in the early 1990s and include over 4000 cards on individuals who lived on the Island from the 18th to 20th centuries. As part of the Peregrini Project a group of volunteers have created and trialled a database which will make this information more accessible. Eventually we would like to make it available via the Internet. We are looking for volunteers who would like to help enter the data into the spreadsheet. This is mainly a home project where we will send you a copy of the database and a PDF of 20 cards at a time to enter and return. Some of his handwriting is difficult to read but that is part of the challenge ! If you would like to help with this project, please contact me on berwickarchives@woodhorn.org.uk .

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

BERWICK MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY LEARNING PROGRAMME

Although the museum is currently closed for the winter, we still welcome school groups whenever they want to visit. Over the winter, groups from both sides of the border have participated in a number of workshops including Castles, The Battle of Flodden, Tudor Berwick and Cholera in Berwick. Workshops are all very hands on and we always encourage pupils to explore primary sources of evidence, either archaeological or documentary or, whenever possible, both! I work closely with Linda Bankier in the archives to find appropriate documentary sources.

Alongside the usual school visits, I'll be working on a few other interesting projects this year including Till Valley Archaeological Society's Village Atlas, Lennel Kirk and two fascinating World War One projects.

Linda and I will be working in partnership with Historic England on a WW1 local history project. We will offer training to local teachers and create education packs for the First and Middle Schools in Berwick about the war, including information on individual soldiers who lived in the area around each school.

Continuing with the World War One theme, the Museums and Archives Northumberland Learning team will be running education and community events at the Rothbury WW1 Training Trenches.

The trenches, located on the moors above Rothbury, were dug in 1915 by the 18th Battalion (1st Tyneside Pioneers) Northumberland Fusiliers for training purposes.

There will be lots of events planned for this year. If you would like more information, please get in touch.



WW1 training trenches at Blaeberry Hill near Rothbury

As well as the formal learning programme, I also run the local branch of the Young Archaeologists' Club. We are looking forward to all sorts of adventures in 2017, including taking part in excavations at Cocklawburn, Bradford Kaims near Bamburgh (an incredible prehistoric wetland site) and on Holy Island. You can find out more about the Flodden Young Archaeologists' Club on our website: www.floddenyac.wordpress.com



Flodden Young Archaeologists digging at Lennel Kirk in 2016

Jane Miller, Education & Outreach Officer, Berwick Museum and Art Gallery
JMiller@woodhorn.org.uk

MAYFAIR REMINISCENCES

THE FIFTIES IN FOCUS

On the front cover of the book and on page 46, is a photo taken on 25th May 1951 of the opening of Berwick May Fair.

This is of interest to me in that Bunty and I lived in Berwick at that time. We had just been married four weeks earlier and did some of our shopping there.

At the time the photo was taken, Bunty would have been teaching at Ord School; I was working at the Bus Station and either busy or away across to Kiln Hill for my dinner.

Post war, things had still been hard to come by; I can't remember if rationing was still on then, but the Fair offered the chance to buy things hitherto difficult/impossible to get.

We had saved enough to buy necessary furniture from George Fairbairn, leaving not a lot in the 'piggy bank'. What you could get from the stalls included china, textiles and lino, which were what we needed.

Stallholders had their own 'patter'. They would hold up something – some dishes, a roll of curtain material, or whatever and shout, 'I'm not asking 10 shillings, not even 5 shillings, this will go to the first one who will give me 3 shillings!' Up went the hands in the rush to get the bargain – which you hadn't seen closely. It brought the crowds who had to wait patiently to see what other offers came up. You, literally, spent hours watching and waiting. We enjoyed going then. As commodities became available the Fair didn't have the same 'draw'.

It was probably that year that, having got furniture, we needed curtains, etc. We didn't have any bedside cabinets so Bunty waited for the Fair, got a couple of clean orange boxes and bought "Bolton Twill" from a stall to make covers for them. Those orange boxes and covers lasted for years before we got 'real' bedside cabinets. I think we still had the orange boxes until we moved from Stockport in 2014! There was a degree of excitement going to the Fair, then. Berwick used to be heaving and, for me, working at the Bus Station, it was very, very busy. No doubt we

bought other things but the “Bolton Twill” sticks in my mind. I think most of the stallholders then were reasonably genuine but there could be exceptions. We had no soup plates and saw these as a good offer. But you didn't see them closely. When we got the 'good offer' home we found they were not level. The soup went to one side. Not helpful!

As a child pre-war I remember the Fair but, obviously, not so well. But I have one memory. My mother bought a nice fruit set, lovely floral decoration inside. They went straight into use, hot rhubarb and custard. No doubt it was very tasty but when we had finished eating the contents there was no pattern left on the plates! I'm still here regardless of the toxins we consumed that day.

Looking at the cover photo, I must have known many of the folk. I can only identify a handful so far. On the extreme right at the bottom, the lady with the black hat, may be Winnie Cuthbert. The Police Sergeant at the front looks like Sgt. Ellison. In the centre, near the front, is a smallish man wearing a large cap. That is Willie Crisp. His father, Archie, had a tobacconist's business off the photo to the left, c.25, High Street.

But look at the shop fronts! Dougie Patterson, Mosgrove, Walter Willson, long before supermarkets – when you went for 'the messages' every day, George Young, the hatter, etc., etc. It depicts another world before depriavation had been invented but yet when some aspects of life were less commercialised and less hurried.

*Fred Kennington,
Lancaster.*

TWEEDMOUTH AND SPITAL COMMON

Whilst undertaking some research at the National Archives in the Greenwich Hospital papers for the Peregrini Project I found this letter about the enclosure of Tweedmouth and Spittal Common:-

ADM 65/79 Receivers In Letters 13 April 1798 - Enclosure of Tweedmouth and Spital Common

John Ibbetson Esqr Newcastle 13th April 1798

Sir

An application is now before Parliament and leave given to bring in a Bill for dividing allotting and inclosing Tweedmouth and Spital Common in which Greenwich Hospital is somewhat interested the Commissioners and Governors having a Dwelling House stable Yard Garden and Croft in respect of which there is a Right of Common upon the said tweed mouth & spital Common. The amount of the Rental of the Estates having Right of Common it is expected will be about £2600 Or £2700 per Annum and the Hospital's House and Premises are worth about £6 per Annum and it is supposed that consent will be obtained to the amount of £2200 or 3230 per Annum. the object to the Hospital is worth very little Attention but it has notwithstanding been thought necessary to examine the Draft of the Bill intended to be presented to Parliament in which it is thought that there is every necessary Provision and consequently it is our advice that the consent on the Part of Greenwich Hospital may be given to this Proposition. We beg leave to add that the Common of Tweedmouth and Spital has always, or however for a very great number of Years been principally eaten by Asses and Ponies belonging to travelling Tinkers Potters &c in consequence of which the Villages of Tweedmouth and Spital have been considered as an Asylum to Persons of the worst Character and Mr. Robt. Antrim who is a very worthy Man and a Tenant of Greenwich Hospital at present at Scremerston was some years ago robbed upon the above Common and it was proposed by one of the Villains to throw him down a Coal Pit but which was happily [prevented] by the Associates in the Robbery; the Board will therefore we have no doubt most readily give encouragement to the putting an end , by means of a Diversion to an almost constant Meeting of Vagabonds of the above description. We are

Your most obedt. Servts.

Walton & Turner

P.S. Mr. Patrick Dickson ye Solicitor to the Bill will / is expected soon to call upon you or Mr. Dyer.

Jane Bowen

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

Berwick Advertiser, 1 September 1871

HERRING BOAT COLLISION AT SEA

On Tuesday morning, Mr James Borthwick, Berwick, master and owner of the herring fishing-boat Ocean Bride, BK 40, reported that on the previous night when at the fishing ground about six miles off the land, and when about to shoot his nets, his boat was run into by the Eyemouth herring fishing-boat Twilight, BK 215. The crew of the Ocean Bride shouted to the crew of the Twilight to steer clear, and after the collision they bequeathed that the Twilight should remain alongside as they were afraid their own boat would sink, but no attention was paid to the request. The Ocean Bride was cut down six planks to the water. Her nets were shifted, and the damaged part of the boat being kept out of the water and the sea being calm, the crew managed to reach the land in safety. The damage is estimated at £10, and Mr Borthwick attributes the collision solely to the carelessness of the crew of the Twilight.

Berwick Advertiser, 1 September 1871

PROPOSED ROWING CLUB FOR TWEEDMOUTH AND SPITTAL

An honourable spirit of rivalry has manifested itself on the part of some of the leading rowers on the south side of the river, to test the racing capabilities of the oarsmen of the Berwick Amateur Rowing Club, and we are glad to learn that the proposition to establish a Rowing Club for Tweedmouth and Spittal begins to meet with favourable reception. If those gentlemen who have suggested the formation of a club would but make a "spurt," in the way of rallying round them the crack rowers resident on the south side, at the same time applying themselves energetically to the collection of sufficient funds to purchase a few boats and erect a boathouse, just now when aquatic sports partially absorb the interest of the public, we entertain not the slightest misgiving that the nucleus of a south club would be provided, and that success would attend its career.

Carole Pringle